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THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE OF HEALTH

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Mary Starck

The Christian Science of Health

Based on the Scripture

By MARY STARCK

Dedicated to those who have lost health, and wish to recover it, and to those who have health, and wish to preserve it.

UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

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INTRODUCTION

The ideas presented in "The Christian Science of Health, based on the Scriptures," are the result of years of experience, observation and study. They are not un-

Typographical Errors.

P. 6, Line 4 - every new idea, and every old idea presented in, etc.

P. 15, Line 29 - and man became a living soul.

P. 17, Line 14 - to keep it is to place, etc.

P. 31, Line 4 - prayer is more than merely asking God, etc.

P. 62, Line 19 - things which are equally incapable, etc.

wide, and there are many souls waiting for the light which may come to them through thy pages; carry a blessing to them, and so fulfill the mission on which thou art sent.

MARY STARCK.

366998

INTRODUCTION

The ideas presented in "The Christian Science of Health, based on the Scriptures," are the result of years of experience, observation and study. They are not untried theories, for they have been put into practice by hundreds of Christians throughout the world, and wherever tried, have proved successful in bringing about a more joyous, healthy and useful life than would have been possible without them, and those who have been living by these principles will have no hesitation in recommending them to anyone who is seeking the right road to health and happiness.

It will be necessary for the reader of this book to keep a Bible by his side throughout the time while he is engaged in its study, as the references given must be read for the proper understanding of "The Christian Science of Health," and as each new truth is grasped, it must be at once put into practice, as this will greatly assist in the comprehension of the rest. Unless this is done, the reader cannot expect to receive any benefit from the book, or from the Bible, whence its ideas are drawn.

To those who do read and practice its principles, however, there will, without doubt, come the blessings of health-improvement and happiness which they have been seeking, and have sought in vain elsewhere.

So the writer would say, "Go, little book, the world is wide," and there are many souls waiting for the light which may come to them through thy pages; carry a blessing to them, and so fulfill the mission on which thou art sent.

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CHAPTER I.

SCIENCE AND RELIGION.

The word science means knowledge, and comes from the Latin word "scientia," which is derived from the verb "scio," meaning "to know." However, it has come to mean more than mere knowledge. A man may have a great deal of knowledge, yet not be master of any science, for science is classified knowledge; all the known facts on a subject, collected and correctly related to each other, compose the science of that subject.

Physiology, for instance, is the science which treats of the organs of plants or animals and their functions. Theology is the science of God and His relations to man.

Knowledge is obtained through the use of the five senses with which man is endowed: seeing, hearing, feeling, tasting, and smelling; it is classified and correlated by reasoning upon the facts observed through the senses.

There are two sources from which we obtain knowledge; nature, and revelation. Nature is a wide field of observation, and while the human race has been busy here for thousands of years, and has gained vast stores of knowledge, which have developed into numerous sciences, yet we can and will continue to study and learn from nature as long as this world endures.

The book of nature, if rightly used, might be sufficient for our physical needs, but as we are more than merely physical beings, something more than physical science is necessary for us. Therefore, through many centuries, God has been giving us a revelation of Himself, His relation to us, and our obligation to Him. This revelation reached its climax in the sending of His Son into the world nearly two thousand years ago. (Heb. 1:1-3).

The history of all that God has revealed about Himself and the human race, is given us in the Bible. God is never silent, and He is still making Himself known and felt through the influence of the Holy Spirit; but the

Bible, having been tested and tried by friends and foes for nearly two thousand years, and having proved to be the only authentic book of revelation in the world, is the standard by which we must gauge every idea, and every old idea presented in a new form, which offers itself for our consideration (Isa. 8:20; 2 Pet. 1:19).

While we usually think of Christianity, the system of faith taught in the Bible, as a religion, we might also call it a science, for it is classified knowledge of God and humanity; of His relation to us, and our duty in view of that relationship.

The science of medicine is that which has to do with the cure or prevention of disease, and the establishment of health. Medicine and religion have always been closely associated in the mind of the race. Among savage tribes, the teacher of religion and the healer of disease are often the same, as in the medicine-man of the Indians, and the witch-doctor of the Africans.

That there must be a real basis for the close relation existing between religion and medicine, is evident from the fact that they constantly keep pace with each other; false religions are always accompanied by inefficient methods of healing; the higher the religious ideals become, the better grows the system of healing; and the most effective medical science has grown up side by side with Christianity, the best religion known to the world.

Paul told us long ago, that godliness is profitable for this life, as well as that which is to come (1 Tim. 4:8), and we find that he was right—that Christianity helps us not only morally and spiritually, but mentally and physically as well. Therefore many who have been neglectful of spiritual things while in health, when sickness comes are willing to study them as an aid to recovery; and although they may not receive the healing they have been led to expect, yet they do find partial relief in placing their thoughts upon higher things.

There is a sound physiological reason for this. Centuries ago, Solomon said, "A merry heart doeth good like

a medicine; but a broken spirit drieth the bones." (Prov. 17:22). And the latest researches in medical science bear out his statement. Emotion causes changes in the action of the various organs of the body. Grief, anger and hatred create poisons, and are life-destroying. Pleasurable emotions, except when too intense, affect the vital organs favorably, and tend to establish health. Thus Christianity, which brings peace and happiness to the soul, and which preserves the poise of life in sorrow and in joy, is life-giving to the body, as well as the spirit of man.

This being the case, sick or well, we should be interested in the things concerning the kingdom of God, and ought to devote a portion of our time each day to studying the great text-book which teaches them—the Bible. There we can learn just what is the character of the Lord and King of life; what work He has done and is doing in the world; why His work is hindered; and how He will triumph over all His enemies; and meditation upon these truths will bring us great rewards in every department of our lives.

Chapter II.

CHRIST HEALING THE SICK.

When Christ began teaching, and had gathered a band of disciples around Him, He also began performing miracles of healing. This was in accordance with Old Testament prophecies relating to the work of the Messiah (Matt. 8:17; Luke 4:18-19).

In studying these miracles, we find that they were performed for three reasons: First, to prove His claim of divinity as the expected Messiah, the Christ, the Son of God, whom He declared Himself to be; second, out of pity for those who were suffering; again and again we read that He was "moved with compassion," "filled with compassion," for those in distress, and put forth His healing power in their behalf; third, to illustrate some truth in a striking way (Matt. 4:13-16; 23-24; Luke 7: 11-15; John 9:1-7).

Yet, as we read the gospels, we notice that healing was not the chief part of His work. His teaching and preaching about the kingdom He had come to establish, occupied the first place, the miracles being subordinate (Matt. 5, 6, 7; 13; 20 to 25; Luke 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 to 16; 18-21; John 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 14 to 17). Faith in Christ is to be based more on the message He brought than on the miracles He wrought. Those who are continually seeking physical proofs of His power, are usually disappointed, as were the Pharisees when they demanded a sign, as a condition of their support (Matt. 12:38-40), and as was Herod, who wanted to see a mircale to satisfy his curiosity (Luke 23:8-9).

Nowhere in the gospels have we the record of a word indicating that Christ desired to establish a new system of healing in the world, but over and over we read that He has come to set up a new standard of living in the world —the rule of love, which in a single law fulfills all the

commandments of God, and is to be kept by faith in the Son of God (Matt. 5:44-48; 22:37-39; John 15:9, 12, 17; and many other passages).

Twice Jesus referred to physicians (Matt. 9:12; Mark 2:17; Luke 5:31; Luke 4:23), and in each case the inference from what He said is that physicians are necessary for the sick, and do heal the sick. Again, one of His miracles was the healing of a woman who had spent all her money for medical treatment, which had proved unavailing, yet Jesus had no word of rebuke for her because she had gone to physicians (Mark 5:25-34; Luke 8:43-48).

Knowing these things, we can understand Christ's ministry of healing better than if we attempt to place it at the foundation of the religion He came to establish. The mircales of healing sprang from His heart of love, revealing the sympathy of the Father who sent Him with suffering humanity, and showing us how our compassion ought to go forth to relieve those in distress.

While we rightly call Jesus Christ the Great Physician, it was not primarily as a healer of men's bodies that He came into the world, but as the Savior of their souls; and His mission was not to save His people from sickness, but to "save His people from their sins" (Matt. 1:21).

We must, therefore, "seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness," and then we have the promise that all things necessary to our life will be added unto us—the food and clothing needed for the comfort and health of the body are promised, and we may be sure that if we do His will He will give us just the degree of health which is best for us, for those around us, and for the growth of His kingdom.

Chapter III.

THE WORKS OF GOD.

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Gen. 1:1). Nature, with all its wonders, is the work of God's hand: land and sea, mountain and plain, hill and valley, river and rivulet, with all that in them dwell, vegetable, mineral, and animal, including man—all were made by Him, and when He looked upon the result of His labor, He declared that it was good.

Everything had a use, some beneficient purpose, and there was nothing to mar the happiness of the first human beings, whom God had created and placed in the Garden of Eden. It was a Paradise into which they had come.

Though man has lost Paradise, God has not changed; still He works in the world, and still His works are good; for He is laboring to restore us to that happy estate from which our first parents fell.

God has two methods of working, one of which we call the natural, the other, the supernatural. In the former, He works through the laws of nature which He has established; in the latter, He works independently of these laws. The changing of the seasons, the seed springing up and maturing into harvests which feed the world; the reproduction of its kind by every plant and living creature, come under the first method; the creation, and what we call miracles, come under the second method.

We might better call these ways in which God works, the usual and the unusual; for the natural method is beyond our understanding equally with the supernatural; while to God the supernatural is as simple as the natural. But having established the laws of nature, He chooses to work through them, except when circumstances demand swifter action, just as a man who has a machine which can be used with electric power or without, might use it without the electricity under ordinary conditions, but apply the power when conditions demand greater speed in his work.

We know that God generally supplies us with bread through the sowing and reaping of wheat, but when the children of Israel, on leaving Egypt, were placed in a position where it was impossible for them to sow and reap, He provided bread by sending food from heaven, which came like the dew each morning until they were settled in their new home, and the need for it was over (Ex. 16:4, 14-15; Josh. 5:12). So, too, He led them through the Red Sea on dry land, as it was imperative for them to cross at once, and they had no time to build bridges or boats (Ex. 14:10-16).

Another occasion on which God uses His supernatural method of working, is when it is necessary to give visible evidences of His power to increase the faith of His people, or to awe the rebellious into obedience to His will (Exodus, chapters 7 to 12; Josh. 3:7-17; 2 Kings 18:31-39).

Again, He uses this method when introducing a new dispensation; as when He was delivering the Israelites from Egypt and setting them up as a nation (Ex. 3); when the Israelites had been oppressed, had repented of sin, and He wished to deliver them (Judges 6:11-12; 19-21; 36-40); and when Christ came to set up His kingdom in the world (John 2:11).

Now it is God "who healeth all our diseases" (Ps. 103:3), but His way of working in healing disease is not different from that in which He does His other work. He has established physical laws which, when observed, bring health; when violated, bring disease. He has also provided in the mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms, remedies for disease, and has given man the wisdom to find and apply these remedies.

As the usual way in which God supplies our need of food is through the natural processes of sowing and reaping, so the usual way in which He cures disease is through the discovery and application of the remedies which He has Himself provided, and the unusual way is without

means, or by means which would not naturally effect a cure.

An instance of the usual method is found in the case of Hezekiah, recorded in 2 Kings 20 and Isaiah 38 (2 Kings 20:1-7; Isa. 38-21). The second, without means, is illustrated in most of the miracles of Christ and the apostles, and by unusual means, in the healing of Naaman the leper (2 Kings 5:14), and in some of the miracles of Christ (Mark 7:31-35; John 9:6-7).

In the parable of the Good Samaritan Christ sets His seal of approval on medical treatment, for the Good Samaritan gave the best known at that time, to the wounded man whom he rescued, and this parable has been the inspiration to physicians, surgeons, and nurses through all the centuries since it was spoken.

Again, in the fifth chapter of John's gospel we have the account of the healing of a paralytic. John tells us that there were five porches filled with diseased humanity, waiting for the stirring of the pool, which gave healing power to the water. Now Christ healed but one man of all that multitude, and he one who was entirely helpless, and had no one to assist him, and no opportunity to take advantage of the healing waters.

It is evident from this incident, that Christ expects us to make use of the means God has provided for the cure of the sick. His command and promise to the apostles (Mark 16:17-18), of miraculous power to be given to them and the believers who should succeed them, has been fulfilled and is being fulfilled, for wherever the Gospel has been preached, wonders of healing and of saving from imminent danger have been wrought by faith in Christ.

God works now as He always has worked; by natural means day by day, and by supernatural means whenever it is necessary for the good of His people or the glory of His name. Therefore we, in our search for health, must work with Him in the physical, as well as the spiritual

realm, studying the laws which govern our bodies, and seeking to live in harmony with them, as well as with the laws which are given for the soul; and although the word of God deals mostly with the spiritual life, yet we will find that whenever it touches upon the physical life, its guidance is as safe for the body as for the mind and spirit of man.

Chapter IV.

THE RELATION BETWEEN BODY AND SOUL.

There are four theories of man's nature, held by different sets of persons who have given more or less thought to the subject. One class of people say that man is merely a physical being; he is the highest animal, but nothing more than animal, and he will perish like an animal; death will end his existence.

A second class believe that man is a purely spiritual being—he is all soul, or mind, and everything material about him and about the whole universe, in fact, is only an illusion created by his mind.

A third class of people, comprising perhaps a majority of all, believe that man is a body, or physical being, but has a soul.

A fourth class of people, also very numerous, drawing their conclusions from revelation, supplemented by experience and observation, say that man is a soul, but has a body.

It is very important to have correct ideas upon this subject, for however a certain class of people may criticize creeds, it is and always has been true that our manner of life is governed by what we believe, and that false beliefs lead to faulty living. Hence we will turn to the most reliable authority to find with which class we shall align ourselves.

Is man wholly a physical being? Is he purely a spiritual being? Both of these questions are answered in the Bible account of the creation of man. "And the Lord God formed man out of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and became a living soul." (Gen. 2:7).

This settles the question "What is man?" by assuring us that he is a living soul, and that this soul is incorporated in a material body, from which it can be separated (Gen. 3:19; Eccl. 12:7).

The body limits and hinders the soul (Matt. 26:41; Rom. 7:22-23); the soul can control the body (1 Cor. 9:27), but only by the help of God can we govern it properly (Rom. 8:7-11). Yet the body is a wonderful creation, and we should praise God for it (Ps. 139:14-16). The body was meant to be a dwelling place for God, "the temple of the Holy Ghost" (1 Cor. 6:19). The body, as well as the soul, belongs to Christ, who died to redeem us (1 Cor. 6:20), and it should be used in the service of God (Rom. 12:1).

God cares for the body, and provides for its needs (Ps. 23:1; Matt. 6:25-32; Phil. 4:19). The body is to die (Gen. 3:19; Job 14:1-2; Ps. 49:14; Ps. 103:14-16; Eccl. 3:20; Heb. 9:27). The soul does not die (Ps. 49:15; 2 Cor. 5:1). It returns to God for judgment, and is punished by a miserable exile from Him, or rewarded by a life of joy in His presence (2 Cor. 5:10; Heb. 9:27; Luke 15:19-26; 23:39-43). The body is to rise from the grave (John 5:28-29); if we belong to Christ, it will then be freed from its imperfections and limitations (Rom. 8:21-23; 1 Cor. 15:46-54).

The soul is more important than the body (Matt. 10:28; 16:24-26); we are not to be good in order that the body may be well, but are to take care of the body in order that we may give God the best possible service (1 Sam. 14:24-30; Acts 27:23-36). As the body has various organs and senses, the harmonious operation of which is necessary to health, so the soul has different capacities and faculties which must work together, if we are to have happiness: what we call intellect, or mind—the power of reasoning upon that which we learn through the senses, is one of these faculties; this is the connecting link between body and spirit, the means of communication by which each exercises control over the other. Ps. 139:23-24; Isa. 55:7; Rom. 12:12. Hence, the importance of right training for the mind can scarcely be over-estimated; because a mind full of wrong ideas will hinder the soul from doing its proper work,

just as surely as filling the stomach with the wrong kind of food would hinder the work of the body (Prov. 3:13; Rom. 8:7; Eph. 4:23; Phil. 4:8).

That which psychologists term the emotions, and which the Bible usually speaks of as the heart, is another faculty of the soul: the power of loving and hating, hoping and fearing, sorrowing and rejoicing; how much we need guidance for the heart, that we may love good and hate evil, hope for the triumph of right, and fear to let wrong gain a foothold in our lives; that we may sorrow over all sin, and rejoice in everything that is good. "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life," says the word (Prov. 4:23), and the only safe way to keep it is to place it in the hands of Him who made it, and who, though it has wandered far from Him, knows all its needs (Prov. 3:5; Ps. 51:10; Ps. 139:23-24; Jer. 17:9).

The power of willing and choosing is another faculty of the soul (Josh. 24:15; John 5:40; Rev. 22:17), which the mind and heart share (Ex. 35:5; 1 Chron. 28:9; 2 Cor. 8:12). By the use of this power we can determine what kind of influences we are going to allow the predominance in our lives, whether they are to be good or evil—of God or of Satan.

Another faculty of the soul is the power of comprehending things unseen—of believing in a God who is invisible to the physical eye—the power of worshipping Him, and of govering our lives by His laws. The soul is often spoken of as comprising the spiritual faculty only, classing the heart and mind separately (Matt. 22:37-39; Acts 4:32).

Now the soul, in all its departments, is united to the body in such a way that, as we have already seen, each exercises control over the other. We know that the body can act upon the spirit; a headache can prevent our thinking clearly; indigestion can make us feel as though we had lost our last friend; and even fatigue can become so great that it almost makes us doubt the existence of God (1 Kings 19:5, 10).

Conversely, we have seen that the soul acts upon the body. We know that the will directs the movements of the body; that the emotions influence the action of various physical organs; anger, fear, or joy, can cause the heart to accelerate its beating; can stop the digestive processes; can cause the face to flush or grow pale; these are only a few of the results which can be wrought by the soul upon the body—some favorable, some unfavorable to its health.

For physiologists and psychologists agree in telling us that many of the bodily functions are controlled by the mind, which has two departments, the conscious and the sub-conscious. With the former we perceive and reason; our perception and thoughts, long continued, sink into the sub-conscious realm, and form our habits of life, when we no longer think about many acts, but perform them mechanically.

Over some of the physical functions the sub-conscious mind, we might say, has original jurisdiction; that is, it is not necessary, under normal conditions, that we think of them at all, for the sub-conscious mind keeps them at work without any effort on our part. But in times of excitement, or mental strain, when we are thinking very intensely, the thoughts of the conscious mind penetrate the sub-conscious realm, and call it from its natural duty. Then the functions which it controls become deranged, and need help to restore them to their normal condition.

Sometimes this can be accomplished simply by relieving the mental strain, either by a change in the circumstances which caused it, or by the entrance of some thought which shall bring peace and joy in spite of them —such as the realization of the fact that God loves us, and that He will bring good out of our troubles; that He sympathizes with us in our distress, and will give us strength to bear it while it is necessary, and He will give us some great blessing through the very thing that is causing our suffering now (Rom. 8:28; 2 Cor. 4:17; 12:9; 1 Pet. 5:7).

If, however, the disordered functions do not go back to their work when the sub-conscious mind is released from the extra duty it has been performing, then the conscious mind, by thinking of them, and trying to establish normal conditions, can assist the sub-conscious mind to do its work, and the physical derangement will disappear.

But sometimes the body refuses to respond to the subconscious mind as before, and then the system needs aid from outside to restore it to working order, and this is where the physician comes in, with remedies which help the body back to harmony with, and obedience to, the subconscious mind.

Not only excitement or trouble, but deep thought, or too much study, can call the sub-conscious mind from its work, and thus be the cause of functional derangement; but whatever the cause, the first step toward restoration is releasing the mind from the strain, and giving the subconscious mind an opportunity to perform its duty.

This being true, we can readily see how obeying the laws of God for the spirit will help us physically. Accepting Christ as our Savior takes away the fear of what may come after death, and fills us with peace instead; trying to please Him fills our lives with objects worth living for, and takes away the restlessness which is so injurious to health; faith in our heavenly Father's love takes away the wearing anxiety for the future, which saps the vitality of those who worry, and gives in its place the confidence which restores strength (Heb. 2:15; John 14:27; Matt. 6:25-33; Isa. 40:31).

Now, we cannot know God's law without studying it, and He has repeatedly told us that we must daily study, meditate upon, and practice its teachings, if we wish to prosper and have success (Deut. 6:4-9; Josh. 1:8; Ps. 1: 1-3; John 5:39; Acts 17-11). So our first step in His way will be taken by applying ourselves to this task, which we shall soon come to look upon not as a duty, but as our greatest pleasure (Ps. 119:97, 103).

Chapter V.

THE LAWS OF HEALTH.

While the laws of health are written in the book of nature, and have been searched out and applied by physiologists and various medical or other systems of healing; and while the book of revelation was given for another purpose than teaching these laws, yet it is not entirely silent upon the subject, and whenever it speaks, as has been found in its touching upon other scientific topics, it is always correct, and in harmony with the most advanced thought of the times. Whenever it has been accused of being inaccurate, later investigations have proved that not the Bible, but science was at fault.

The Spirit of God moving upon the waters to create the world (Gen. 1:2), and the Holy Ghost moving upon the souls of men to produce the Scriptures (2 Pet. 1:21), are one and the same, and therefore His word in both agrees, for He is the Spirit of truth, and speaks the truth (John 14:16-18).

The Bible recognizes all the needs of the human body, and gives instances of God's provision for them.

The first indication of life in the body, is breathing; when breathing ceases, life is gone. God has adapted the lungs to the air, and the air to the lungs, and sets them working together (Gen. 2:7; Acts 17:25). But we can poison the air, and thus injure our lungs, and through them our whole bodies (1 Cor. 12:26); sometimes this is done through necessity, as in chemical work, where noxious gases are formed, which harm those engaged in such labor, and from which scientists are trying to find means of protection.

Many persons, especially men, poison the air through tobacco smoke, which they use as a pleasure, forgetting that they are not only injuring their own bodies, but also poisoning the air which others must breathe, and causing suffering to them; many girls, as well as men who do not

use tobacco, are seriously affected by being compelled to share the atmosphere which their employers or fellow-employees have poisoned with the smoke of pipes, cigars, or cigarettes, and the families of tobacco users are likewise victims of disease caused by those who profess to love them dearly, but who seem after all, to love tobacco better.

We can cause ourselves needless illness by shutting ourselves in rooms without sufficient air, or with no ventilation; the air we breathe becomes charged with carbonic acid, and robbed of its oxygen, and needs to be exchanged for fresh air, therefore we must have open windows or doors through which a fresh supply may come (Gen. 6:16).

Yet we need not go to the extreme of having the circulation of air so strong that it chills us; fresh air is not necessarily cold, nor need it create a draught. Those who have low vitality or weak constitutions should protect themselves from these things, not gauging themselves by standards set up by those who have strong constitutions and abundant vitality.

The manner of our breathing is also important; many of our ills come from using only a limited portion of our breathing apparatus, and therefore obtaining too small a supply of the oxygen which is needed for purifying the blood. We must learn to breathe deeply, and the women should keep their clothing loose enough so that there will be no obstruction to the free use of the lower, as well as the upper part of the lungs.

The second need of the body seems to be for food, and when God placed Adam in the Garden of Eden, He supplied this need (Gen. 2:16). He provided food for the Israelites in the wilderness (Ex. 16:10-16); for Noah and his family (Gen. 9:1-3); for Elijah (1 Kings 17:2-6; 7-16; 19:4-8), and for others, both in natural and miraculous manner, showing that He regards our need of food as of great importance.

That there is a difference in the quality of food and

drink, is another fact given recognition, and we find that God not only made provision that the supplies of the Israelites should have proper qualities, but that He also gave them instructions for the use of animal food, all of which were well suited to the climate in which they lived, and many of which, for sanitary reasons, apply at all times and in all places (Ex. 15:23-24; 2 Kings 2:19-22; 4:38-41; Lev. 11:1-47).

Regularity in partaking of food is another necessity if we wish to have good health; a certain quantity of the manna was measured out for each person, during the journeying of the Israelites (Ex. 16:18). They were not expected to gorge one day and fast another.

Abstinence from food is recognized as abnormal (1 Sam. 28:22; Mark 6:31), and that it is best for people to eat at the accustomed time, is indicated by the fact that Jesus would not send His congregation home supperless (John 6:5-11); again, after the resurrection He furnished His disciples with a morning meal (John 21:4-14). Peter was hungry at midday, when his dinner seems to have been somewhat delayed (Acts 10:9-10); so we see that three meals a day have been customary for many centuries, and most physiologists and physicians agree that it is a sensible custom to divide the necessary amount of food to support life into three portions, rather than eat it all at once.

Some are advocating two meals a day now, saying that many of us over-eat, and consume enough to amply sustain us, in two meals a day. We should find by experience the proper amount of food for ourselves, and divide it into as many meals as we find agreeable to our own digestive organs, whether two or three average meals, or with delicate persons and children, four or five lighter meals a day, always to be taken at the same hours.

Water is another primary need of the body; instances of God's recognition of and provision for this need are found in the history of Hagar (Gen. 21:14-19); in the journeyings of the Israelites (Ex. 15:23-25; Num. 20:7-11); and in Elijah's experience (1 Kings 17:6).

The use of intoxicating drinks is recognized as an evil, and warnings against them are given (Lev. 10:9-10; Prov. 20:1; 23:29-33; Eph. 5:18). Simple foods and no stimulants are better than rich foods and intoxicants (Dan. 1:8-20). Most of us would be benefitted by drinking more freely of pure water, preferably between meals.

Clothing, though not originally a human need, became one, and God has made provision for this, also (Gen. 3:21; Matt. 6:28-30).

Exercise is necessary to health, and God provided this by giving Adam some work to do—taking care of the garden in which he was placed (Gen. 2:15).

Rest is one of the great needs of the body, and God made provision for this by the darkness of night, in which nature compels us to cease from labor (Gen. 1:3-5; John 9:4). He has further set aside one day in seven, in which man is to cease from labor, and turn his thoughts to the things of God, that in body and spirit he may store up strength for the duties of another week (Ex. 20:8-11).

No law of health is so much broken in our time, as this law of rest, especially in America. Electricity enables us to turn night into day, and we violate the laws of God by working far into the night (whether at useful labor or in the pursuit of pleasure makes little difference so far as the physical effect is concerned, except that some forms of pleasure are more strenuous and more harmful than work); thus, instead of recuperating from the effects of one day's work before that of another begins, we are drawing upon our reserve force, which is the power that defends us from disease, and we go down at the first onslaught of the germs that creep in at some unguarded spot.

The Sabbath, too, is almost disregarded as a day of rest; whatever we may think of the duty of worship on that day, for our own sakes we should not turn it into a day of pleasure-seeking, from which we return exhausted. The pleasure of a trip to beach or mountain, river

or lake, or of the visit to friends, is dearly bought when we consider the wasted opportunity of restoring vitality to its normal height.

Sabbath breaking is a sin which brings its own punishment to our nation; in nervous prostration, dyspepsia, heart-failure, and a multitude of other diseases due to the over-taxing of our bodies, we are paying the penalty for violation of God's law of rest.

Nature demands rest, and if we do not give it willingly, she takes it by force. If we insist upon exerting ourselves to the limit of our endurance each day, instead of taking the amount of rest the system requires, we are sooner or later thrown upon a sick-bed, where the time we think we have saved by our over-work, is taken back, with interest.

Especially upon those who are not strong, should be urged the duty of observing the law of rest—daily and weekly. Many persons require more than the normal eight hours rest of the night. The difference between a life of misery and a life of comfort, may often be made by an hour or two of rest every afternoon.

There are many persons who need a course of lessons on "How to Rest." Have you ever heard anyone say, when advised to lie down and rest, "O, it never does me any good to lie down; I always feel worse when I get up than I did before?" Quite true; but if you should see how this person does the supposed resting, you would not be surprised at the failure to be helped by it; he or she (usually she) lies down on the couch or bed, with muscles drawn as tight as a drum-head; not the least relaxation of the body, and with a mind racing along in its thoughts of something that ought to be done, and its desire to do it just as soon as possible.

My friends, don't say you have tried resting, if this is what you have been calling rest. Try real resting before you pronounce it worthless; if possible, get into some loose garment—but whether you do that, or not—relax; let go your hold upon yourself; try to act just as though

it were night, and you were going to sleep; and relax your mind, equally with your body; just drop the thoughts of the things clamoring to be done, for when you have rested the work will go on so much better than before. When you have once learned to rest, you will seize every opportunity to fit yourself for your work by storing up energy to do it quickly and well.

Cleanliness and sanitation, which are so important in the preservation of health and prevention of disease, are clearly taught in the Bible (Ex. 19:10; Lev. 13:14-15; Deut. 23:12-14). Moral purity, which is even more necessary, is strictly enjoined in the Mosaic law (Ex. 20:14; 21:7-10; 22-16; Leviticus, chapters 18 and 20; Deut. 22:22-30); and it is emphasized in the New Testament (Matt. 5:27-32; 1 Cor. 6:9-10; Gal. 5:16; Eph. 5:3).

The last, but by no means least important, law of health, is peace-seeking; the Psalmist tells us that control of the tongue, and doing good rather than evil, will bring peace, and thus help to prolong life, as well as make it more enjoyable (Ps. 34:12-14).

A perturbed state of mind is a great hindrance to recovery from sickness,a great factor in producing disease, and what causes more disturbance of mind in ourselves and others, than a wrong use of the tongue? For our own sakes, as well as the sake of others, we should join in the prayer of David: "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips" (Ps. 141:3). The best watchman at the door of the lips, is love—let us ask God to put it into our hearts, so that the words which issue from our tongues and mouths through our lips, may be kind instead of critical, charitable instead of cruel.

Deeds, as well as words, can produce discord; often acts perfectly harmless in themselves, will rouse others to anger; we should avoid giving offense to others by our actions, even at the cost of self-sacrifice; the peace procured by giving up our own way will be well worth the price.

The Bible tells us that it is God who heals all our diseases (Ps. 103:2-3), and science testifies to the truth of this word; that He has put within us a healing power, which strives to overcome disease or injury, and often does so without any assistance from the outside; but often our power of resistance is impaired, and disease would gain the victory if we could not receive help from some source; it is the province of medicine to supply the assistance which nature requires (2 Kings 20:7; Luke 10:33-34).

Now, does this conflict with the idea that God is the healer? Not at all, for it is He who supplies the healing agency, whether it comes from within or without, naturally or miraculously. He alone has power to restore health, and therefore we should always look to Him for help first of all, and if it is best for us, He will restore us either through the power within us, or by showing us where to go for the healing from without.

We must not expect, however, that God will do for us what we ought to do for ourselves; we can not expect to go on disregarding these laws of health which we have been studying, and then have Him work a miracle to overcome the effects of our disobedience; neither can we expect Him to cure us through the physician and medicine, unless we do our part by taking care of ourselves in the manner which He has directed: By the use of pure air and sunshine; by cleanliness of person and surroundings; by moral purity; by clothing sufficient for comfort; by rest for body and mind; by the use of pure food and water in sufficient quantity; and by the peaceable life which comes from controlling the tongue with love.

Most of us who have poor health, have not ruined it beyond repair, and even though we may have weak constitutions to build upon, if we observe these laws we shall find ourselves able to live more comfortably, and to accomplish far more in the world, than we would have thought possible.

CHAPTER VI.

PRAYER.

"More things are wrought by prayer than the world dreams of," says Tennyson. "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much," we are told by the apostle James, and he cites two instances from the life of Elijah in support of this statement: the prophet prayed that it might not rain, and it did not rain for three years; then he prayed for rain to fall, and immediately the clouds began to form, and soon the earth was drenched in response to his prayer (1 Kings 17:1; 18:41-45; Jas. 5:16-18).

All through the Bible, we have illustrations of the same fact. Moses, and Joshua, and Samuel, David, and Hezekiah, and Daniel, Peter, and John, and Paul, with others too numerous to mention, all prayed time after time, and time after time were saved from peril, triumphed over enemies, and overcame obstacles insuperable to human strength or skill.

Now what is prayer, the medium by which so many wonders have been wrought? One of our well known hymns tells us,

> "Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,
> Uttered or unexpressed;
> The motion of a hidden fire
> That burns within the breast."

This desire reaches out after God, and always finds Him (Matt. 7:7-8; Luke 11-13). The first step to salvation, (Luke 18:13; Acts 9:6), the first evidence of the Christian life (Acts 9:11), the greatest protection against sin (Eph. 6:18), is prayer.

Many persons start out in life believing in prayer, but later say that they have lost faith in it, because some of their prayers were not answered—that is, they did not receive every gift and blessing for which they asked. Others, with the same experience of failing to receive some things for which they have earnestly prayed, instead of losing faith in prayer, have made a closer study of its nature, purpose, and laws, and have come out with firm-

er faith, as well as increased knowledge and love for God.

With a change in one word, Victor Hugo's definition of prayer becomes correct and complete: "To place, by process of thought, the finite below in contact with the infinite above, is prayer."

There are some who now tell us that prayer is not necessary nor desirable, quoting in support of this teaching the words of Christ, "For your heavenly Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask Him" (Matt. 6:8). These persons evidently forget that immediately after making this statement, Christ gave the disciples the model prayer which we know as the Lord's Prayer (Matt. 6:9-13); that to their knowledge He often went away to pray alone (Matt. 14:23; Mark 6:46; Luke 22:39-41); that He frequently prayed in their presence, sometimes silently, sometimes audibly (Matt. 11:25; Luke 9:28-29; John 11:41-42; 17:1-26); and that He specifically commanded them to pray, and instructed them as to the manner in which they should pray (Matt. 6:5-13; 9:38; 26:41; Luke 11:5-10; 18:1-14).

God does know our needs, and His power is always ready for us, but the "finite below" must come into contact with "the infinite above" if we wish to receive its blessing. Our homes may be connected with the electric lighting plant, and the company may know that we need light, but we ourselves must press the button or turn the switch which lets the current into our lamps, and floods our homes with light. Prayer is the switch that enables us to bring the power of God into our lives, and illuminate them.

Parents know the needs of their children, yet they would not be satisfied to have their boys and girls not realize their own needs, and not talk about them with father and mother. Food and clothing, and education are not rightly appreciated, and not used to the best advantage, until the children realize their need of them, and desire them enough to ask for them. So God, though He knows our needs, and supplies many of them without being asked, yet wants us to realize our own needs enough

to come to Him with requests in regard to them, for only then will we be able to appreciate what He gives us as we ought (Isa. 55:6; Luke 11:9-13).

But prayer is more than mere asking God to supply our needs and fulfill our desires. As parents want companionship with their children, to hear their plans and their confidences, to receive their thanks as well as their requests, so God wants companionship with His children —wants us to tell Him our joys and our sorrows, our hopes and our fears, and our thanks for what He has given, as well as requests for new gifts (Ps. 107:1-8; Dan. 6:10; Phil. 4:6). The child who makes a confidant of a good father or mother, will never be found in the paths of evil; neither will the Christian who makes a confidant of God ever go astray.

The Bible is a text-book on prayer. It tells us when to pray; we are to pray when troubled, to pray when we are happy, pray when tempted, pray at all times and under all circumstances (1 Chron. 29:9-19; Ps. 50:15; Matt. 26:41; Luke 18:1; Eph. 6:18; I Thess, 5:17, 25).

The Bible also tells us how to pray. We are to pray alone (Neh. 1:4; Matt. 6:6), to pray with others privately (Dan. 2:17-18; Matt. 18:19-20), and to pray with others publicly (2 Chron. 6:12-42; Ezra 9:4-11; Isa. 56: 7; Luke 1:10; Acts 4:24-31).

The conditions of prevailing prayer are clearly set forth for us. If we want to have our prayers answered, we must fulfill the conditions, some of which are inward, some outward as well as within.

Our requests must be proffered with humility; not according to our deserving, but only according to God's mercy, can we receive blessings from Him (Gen. 18:27, 30, 32; 1 Chron. 29:10-15; Ps. 51:17; Luke 7:6-7; 18: 9-14).

Disobedient children can not expect to have all their wishes granted; so if we want to receive what we ask of God, we must be obedient to him (Ps. 66:18; Isa. 1:15; 59:1; Jer. 14:10-12; John 9:31).

Our prayers must be unselfish (Ex. 32:31-34; Neh. 1:6; John 17:20; Eph. 1:15-17; 2 Thess. 1:11-12; I Tim. 2:1-2; Jas. 4:3). They must be earnest (Josh. 7:6; 2 Chron. 6:19-21, 40; Neh. 1:8, 11; Dan. 9:3; Luke 22:41-44). They must be sincere (Ps. 145:18; Isa. 1:13-17; Matt. 6:7-8; 1 Tim. 2-8). They must come from a thankful heart (1 Chron. 29:13; Ps. 56:12-13; 116:16-17; Matt. 11:25-26; John 11:41-42; Eph. 1:15-16; Phil. 4:6-7).

As the requests of children are always subject to the will of the parents, because of their superior wisdom, so our petitions must be made in the spirit of submission to our heavenly Father, who knows better than we what is best for us and for others (2 Sam. 24:14; Matt. 6:10; 26:39, 42, 44; 1 John 5:14-15).

We must have fellowship with God in order to prevail in prayer (Ps. 91:1, 14-15; John 15:7). If we are out of harmony with God, our prayer will often be for wrong things, and then our petitions must be refused (Isa. 59:1; Matt. 12:38-40).

Our prayers must be confident, from hearts full of faith in God's ability and willingness to help us (1 Kings 18:42-44; 2 Chron. 14:11; Matt. 9:18, 23-26; 21:22; Luke 7:7-9; Jas. 1:5-7).

We must remember God's promises, and base our pleas upon them (Ex. 33:12-14; Num. 14:17-19; 2 Chron. 6:16-17; Neh. 1:8-9; Isa. 43:26; Acts 4:24-31). We must persevere in prayer, not being discouraged if the answer is delayed for some time (Ps. 55:17; Dan. 6:10; Matt. 15:21-28; Luke 18:1-8; Rom. 12:12; Eph. 6:18; 1 Thess. 5:17).

We must forgive others as we wish to be forgiven, if we want God to answer our prayers (Matt. 6:12, 14-15; Mark 11:25-26; Luke 23:33-34; Acts 7:60).

Our chief desire must be for the glory of God, if we want our petitions granted (Num. 14:13-17; 1 Kings 18:36-37; Ps. 43:3-4; Isa. 37:14-20; John 11:42; 14-13; Acts 4:29-31).

Our requests must be brought in the name of Christ (John 14:13-14; 15:16; 16:23-24; Eph. 4:14-19), and we must have the holy Spirit to plead with and for us (Zech. 12:10; Rom. 8:26; Eph. 6:18).

One reason why some persons have little faith in the power of prayer, is because God does not always answer our prayers in just the way we expect, and we sometimes fail to recognize the answer when it comes. Moses asked to see the glory of God, and was given only a partial revelation (Ex. 33:17-23). The Israelites asked God to remove the fiery serpents. He did not remove the serpents, but provided a remedy for those who were bitten (Num. 21:4-9). The remnant left in Palestine at the time of the captivity asked Jeremiah to pray for them for direction from God; the counsel God gave was contrary to their desires, and they disobeyed it (Jer. 42:1-6; 7-10, 19-22). The Samaritan woman asked for the water of which Jesus spoke, thinking it would be a labor-saving device for her. Jesus answered her prayer by giving her the spiritual water which cleansed her life from sin, and made her a pure woman (John 4:15-30).

We sometimes forget that a negative answer is just as much an answer as a positive one. While children may feel and act rebellious when their parents refuse to grant some requests, they at least do not accuse the parents of not answering, as we often unjustly do our heavenly Father. "No" is just as much an answer as "Yes," and when we have fulfilled the conditions mentioned, yet God says "No," we may rest assured that what we ask would not be best for us, or He would grant it. "No good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly" (Ps. 84:11).

David prayed that his child might not die, but God took the child, and David did not say that God had not answered him (2 Sam. 12:15-23). Paul prayed for deliverance from a trouble which he calls "a thorn in the flesh." God did not remove the trouble, but promised him grace to bear it (2 Cor. 12:7-9), and Paul rejoiced as

much as if it had been removed (2 Cor. 12:10). Even Christ had one prayer not granted. He wanted the cup of suffering removed, but God gave Him strength to drink it to the dregs, and thus to win salvation for a lost world (Luke 22:41-43).

One fact which we notice in studying the prayers recorded in the Bible, is that those who prayed not only expected answers, but were watching for them (Judges 6: 16-21; 35-40; 1 Kings 18:41-45; 2 Kings 2:1-14; 2 Chron. 20:1-4; 14-17; 20-23; Matt. 8:5-13; Mark 2:1-12; Acts 9:36-40).

We often receive answers to our prayers, but fail to recognize them, because we have not been watching for them; sometimes they come sooner than we expected; sometimes they are long delayed, and we have given up hope of having our desires granted; and sometimes, as has been said before, they come in a different way than we expected; and sometimes the answer is "no" instead of "yes," but if we will learn to watch for God's response, we will find that He never fails to answer prayer, except when the conditions have not been complied with, and He has told us plainly that He will not do that; so He has never broken any of His promises, and we can rest upon them with the assurance that we will receive their blessings, if we only do our part.

There is nothing more vitally important to health, than learning to pray aright. Prayer brings us into touch with God, leads us to cast all our cares upon Him, and find the rest of spirit without which it is impossible to enjoy real physical rest. Often when we have been unwise enough to tire our bodies so much that sleep refuses to come to our weary eyelids, or when sickness, or pain, or grief, is keeping us awake, though we may not fall asleep for hours, perhaps not all through the night, yet by prayer and meditation upon the promises of God, we can keep calm, and lie quietly resting, instead of tossing about and worrying because sleep does not come.

All the bodily functions will work better, if we con-

fide our troubles to God, instead of eating out our hearts with worry over them. The best medicine for the nerves, the best tonic for the heart, is prayer. Sometimes it makes the physician unnecessary, but even when we must call in medical aid, the remedies brought by the doctor will act far more quickly and satisfactorily upon one who constantly makes use of prayer, than upon those who do not pray.

In view of these facts, should we not all say, as the disciples did, "Lord, teach us to pray," and then study the lessons on prayer given in His word, and practice them until we can offer "the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man," which "availeth much?" (Jas. 5:16).

Chapter VII.

THE CHARACTER OF GOD.

The works of God give us much evidence concerning His character, for they correspond with the nature of Him who created them. In them we see that He is a being of great power, for only such a being could have created the mighty ocean, the great rivers which empty into its bosom, the towering mountains, and the vast domains of desert and prairie, upon the earth, as well as the greater planetary system of which our world is but a small part.

In them we see also, that the Creator, though so powerful, is gentle; for He has hidden the violet in the forest; the little birds He makes to nest among the foliage; little brooks flow quietly through peaceful valleys, and wild flowers blossom unmolested along their borders.

The works of God teach us that He is wise, for everything that He has made is wonderfully adapted to its purpose; and only infinite wisdom could plan, create, and superintend the complex organism of a single human body, to say nothing of the universe, and the manifold forms of life with which it teems.

Surely, as we look up into the starry sky, whether we are altogether ignorant of astronomy, or have become deeply versed in its lore, we can say, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth His handiwork" (Ps. 19:1); and whether we are well grounded in the sciences which have grown out of man's study of the earth, or have learned but little in regard to them, the mere sight of the beauties of nature moves us to say with the Psalmist, "O Lord, how manifold are Thy works! In wisdom hast Thou made them all." (Ps. 104:24).

Yet, after all has been said about what we learn concerning our Maker through His works, our knowledge of Him is still very imperfect, and again we must turn to

"the book He has given" for a more complete revelation of His character.

Many things which we see in nature are only a puzzle to us, until viewed through the medium of the word of God, and yet other, and more important truths, we could never learn at all without the Bible.

Only a brief outline of the facts concerning God's character can be given here. If we were to undertake a thorough treatment of this subject, it alone would require a large volume, instead of a single chapter of a little book.

"The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters," we are told in the account of the creation (Gen. 1:2), and Christ gives His testimony that "God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24). The facts which we learn about Him from nature are corroborated by His word, which tells us that He is omnipotent (Gen. 17:1; Ex. 6:3), gracious (Ex. 34:6), merciful (Ps. 116:5), wise (Ex. 4:11-12; Prov. 3:19; Rom. 11:33), and glorious (Isa. 6:1-3; Rev. 21:23).

The Scriptures are rich in additional information concerning the character of God, but from this abundant material we select just a little here, leaving the reader to study it in its entirety directly from the Bible.

A few of His characteristics are these: God is omniscient, as well as omnipotent (Ps. 139:1-6); He is omnipresent (Ps. 139:7; Jer. 23:23; Acts 17:27); holy (Ps. 99:9; Isa. 5:16; Rev. 4:8); just (Gen. 18: 19; Ps. 7:8-11; Rev. 15:3); merciful (Ex. 34:6-7; Ps. 86:5).

Last of all, His character is summed up for us in three words—"God is love" (1 John 4:8, 16).

Since God is Spirit, in the minds of many persons there has been perplexity and confusion in regard to His nature. Personality in our minds is so closely associated with its bodily manifestation, that it is hard for us to realize that the embodiment is not necessary to personality, which is really of the spirit, rather than of the flesh.

We can illustrate this truth by a familiar fact. A

young man and woman love one another, he is tall and well-built, full of the vigor of youth. She has just blossomed into womanhood; her eyes are bright, the rose-tint of health is upon her cheeks. No one wonders that they should love each other, for it is a pleasure merely to look upon their physical perfection.

Fifty years pass away; years filled with hard work, trouble, accidents, and sickness. The bent form of an old man meets our gaze; he walks with a cane, for he is weak and trembling, and half-blind; a withered old woman walks by his side; her eyes are dim, her cheeks are pale and wrinkled.

But how tenderly thoughtful they are for each other! They love each other even better now than on the day when they pledged their faith at the altar; for though the bodies so full of health and strength have been changed beyond recognition, love abides, because the same spirits dwell in the crumbling tenements of clay, that dwelt in the perfect bodies of the youth and maiden of fifty years ago.

So embodiment is not necessary to personality, and God, though a Spirit, is not merely an influence or principle, but a strong personality, the Scriptures tell us. The following are a few of the instances in which He is shown acting as a person: He strives with sinners (Gen. 6:3); calls upon people to reason with Him (Isa. 1:18); can be vexed (Isa. 63:10); speaks to people (Gen. 18:25-26; Matt. 3:17; 17:5); He rejoices (1 Chron. 29:17; Prov. 15:8; Hab. 11:5-6); He judges (Deut. 32:36; Ps. 67:4; Jer. 11:20; Ezek. 7:27; Acts 10:42; Rev. 11:18); He forgives (Num. 14:18; 2 Chron. 7:14; Matt. 6:14; Eph. 4:32).

One of the most important facts about God's character, is that it is unchanging (Num. 23:19; Ps. 33:11; Heb. 6:7; Jas. 1:17). It is this truth which gives us confidence in Him. If He had not this quality, we of these later centuries could not know Him, for we would not know whether His thoughts and His works were to be the

same toward us as toward His people in ages past, or not; but we are repeatedly assured that God does not change, therefore we can know Him through what the Bible tells us about Him, and can learn what He wants us to do in view of our relationship to Him.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE TRINITY.

There are a few religions besides Christianity, which teach that there is but one God; there are many non-Christian faiths which teach that there are many gods; but Christianity is the only religion which tells us of one God who exists in three distinct persons: the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, or Holy Spirit.

Now this fact may seem beyond comprehension to us, yet it is very plainly taught in the Bible (Matt. 28:19; Acts 5:3-4; Heb. 1:8), and while we may not feel that we can fully grasp this truth, yet there have been given illustrations which help us to understand it sufficiently to believe it and act upon it, as we are daily obliged to believe and act upon things of earth which are beyond human understanding.

The hand has been used as an illustration of the Trinity: one hand, but five fingers, which may act separately or in unison, as the work requires. Water has also been used as an illustration; it may be river, lake, or brook, but it is always water, and always has the same qualities.

Another comparison which may help us to understand the Trinity, is that of a business firm; there may be three men in the company, going under one firm name, yet each having an individual name. They share equally in the work and profits, and any one of them is authorized to act for the firm, yet each has some particular part of the business for which he is responsible.

So God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, the three persons of the Trinity, work together in the creation and crontrol of heaven and earth, the universe, and all that they contain (Gen. 1:26; Matt. 11:25-27; John 1:1-3, 14).

At the same time, true to this illustration, each person of the Trinity has His own special work. For example, God the Father is the law-giver (Ex. 20:3; Isa.

33:22). He punishes for transgressions (Ex. 20:5-7; Neh. 9:32-33; Heb. 12:5-10). He planned the redemption of humanity (John 3:16). He sent the Holy Spirit into the world (John 14:26). He decides the times and seasons for all the affairs of His kingdom(Matt. 24:36; Acts 1:7).

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, carried out the Father's plan of redemption by giving Himself as a sacrifice for our sins (Acts 5:30-31; Eph. 1:3-7; Heb. 13:12; 1 John 1:7; 2:2). He makes intercession for us (Rom. 8:34; 1 Tim. 2:5; Heb. 7:25; 1 John 2:1). He is the head of the church (Matt. 21:42; Eph. 1:22; Col. 1:18). He is our example (John 13:15; Eph. 5:1-2; 1 Pet.. 2:21).

The Holy Ghost, also called the Holy Spirit, appoints and commissions the servants of God (Isa. 48:16; Acts 13:2); convicts of sin (John 16:8-11); the Holy Spirit teaches about Christ (John 14:26; 15:26); He guides Christians (John 16:13). He gives the second birth (John 3:5-6). He gives power to live a new life (Rom. 8:2-5; 9-11; Gal. 5:16-23). He makes Christians feel that they are children of God and brethren of Christ (Rom. 8:14-16). He helps us to pray, and makes intercession for us (Rom. 8:26-27).

All who believe in God as revealed in the Bible, acknowledge His authority and supremacy theoretically, whether they carry out their belief in practice or not, for the position He holds is clearly set forth in the Scriptures (Ex. 20:3; Ps. 46:10; Isa. 40:18, 22-23, 25-26; Jer. 32:17-19; 1 Tim. 1:17; Rev. 7:9-12). Some, however, even of those who worship God sincerely, fail to understand that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and the "Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost," are to be honored equally with the Father; yet this truth is taught in the Bible as unmistakably as the other.

God has promised to give His Son dominion over all the world (Ps. 2:7-12; Phil. 2:9-11). God acknowledges Jesus Christ as His Son (Matt. 3:17; 17:5; Luke 1:31-32). He is to judge the world (Matt. 16:27; 25:31-33;

Acts 17:31). Christ has the fulness of the Godhead (Col. 2:9). He is worshipped as God by the angels and the redeemed in heaven (Rev. 5:5-12; 7:9-12).

The Holy Spirit likewise is often spoken of as God (Luke 1:35; Acts 5:3-4; 1 Cor. 6:11; 1 Pet. 4:14). Christ gives the Holy Ghost highest honor, counting sin against the Spirit of God worse than sin against the Son of God, or even the Father Himself (Matt. 12:31); and well may it be true that sin against Him is unpardonable, For He is the only person of the Godhead present in the world today, and if we reject His leading and pleading, there is no one to bring us to Christ for salvation, no one to shed the love of God abroad in our hearts, and we are forever lost.

The Father has done all He can to save us (John 3:16). The Son of God has done His part (Heb. 10:11-13). Now Christ has returned to glory, and sent the Holy Spirit to finish the work of redemption, and if we reject His leading, there will be no one to save us (John 16:7-15). When we are saved, He must be our only dependence to qualify us for work in the kingdom of God (Acts 1:4-8). He must be our teacher and guide as we seek to study the Bible, for the author can best explain the meaning of His own work (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:21); so as we open His book we should pray to Him as did David the Psalmist: "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law" (Ps. 119:18).

Chapter IX.

THE ENEMIES OF GOD.

As we have already noticed, when God had finished the creation of the world, He looked upon all that He had made, and pronounced it good. Yet now there are many things around us which are evil, and we are not living in perfect and happy circumstances, as were our first parents. Now, how did conditions become so changed?

The Bible does not leave us to guess at the answer to this question. In the account of the creation of man, we are told that God gave him life, health and happiness on one condition—that of perfect obedience.

It might seem to us that obedience would have been easy, since only one command was given to Adam. We, who are accustomed to a multitude of statutes and ordinances, sometimes feel that our first parents should have easily been able to retain possession of Paradise, when they had but one law to obey (Gen. 2:7-17).

However, when we think thus, we are reckoning without a very important factor. There was a serpent in Eden—not only the physical serpent which we know as the snake, but a far more subtle and dangerous one—a spiritual serpent, the tempter of mankind, whom the Scriptures refer to as "Satan," "Beelzebub," "that old serpent," "the devil," and other names (Gen. 3:1-7; Mark 3:22-26; Rev. 12:9; 20:2).

In him we find a bitter enemy of God and man (1 Pet. 5:8). We learn that he was once in heaven, but for rebellion against God was cast out (Luke 10:18). He is a powerful personality, and influenced other angels to join him in his rebellion (2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6). He is called the prince of the devils, as he has a large following, and with them is seeking to obtain permanent control of the world.

This throws further light upon the origin of evil, a question about which many are troubled, asking whether

God created evil. Certainly He did not, for God is good, and created all things good. Evil is self-originating, and God has opposed it from the beginning, and will finally triumph over it entirely, and forever.

But Adam and Eve knew nothing of the existence of this enemy of God, and when he came to Eve, telling her that God had a selfish motive in the command that He had given, and that partaking of the forbidden fruit, instead of causing death, as God had said, would bring them wisdom and honor, she believed what the tempter said, and acted accordingly, as did Adam when he had heard her report of what Satan had told her.

Their mistake was in not inquiring of God concerning what the tempter told them, but as we, with the knowledge of his existence, and the light which the Bible throws upon his character, often make the same mistake, it behooves us not to judge them harshly, for no doubt in their place we should have done no better.

What we should do now, is not to spend our time criticizing our first parents, or speculating upon what might have been if they had acted differently; but our duty is to learn what the Scriptures teach about this great enemy of God and man, and learn how to resist him and how to keep out of the snares he sets for us.

We have already found that he is powerful and subtle; we further find that he is presumptuous (Job 1:6; Matt. 4:5-6); he is proud (1 Tim. 3:6); wicked (1 John 2:13); deceitful (2 Cor. 11:14; Eph. 6:11); fierce and cruel (Luke 8:29; 9:39, 42; 1 Pet. 5:8).

As the works of God are an evidence of His character, and in keeping with it, so the works of Satan correspond with his character. Hating God, he opposes His work (Zech. 3:1; 1Thess. 2:18); he opposes the gospel (Matt. 13:19; 2 Cor. 4:4); perverts the Scriptures (Matt. 4:6); works lying wonders (2 Thess. 2:9; Rev. 16:14); is the father of lies (1 Kings 22:22; John 8:44); and appears as an angel of light (2 Cor. 11:14).

With such an enemy seeking to destroy us physically,

mentally, and spiritually (Luke 22:31; 1 Pet. 5:8), is it any wonder that sin, sickness, and death, with all their attendant suffering and sorrow, abound in this world of ours? And should we not learn how to guard against this adversary, who has never been vanquished by anyone except Christ, the Son of God and Savior of the world, who will some day triumph over him completely and forever? (Matt. 4:11; 8:31-32; Mark 1:23-26; Acts 16:18; 1 John 3:8).

Chapter X.

THE CONFLICT BETWEEN GOOD AND EVIL.

With the fall of man began a conflict in this world, which has been going on ever since (Gen. 3:15), and which will continue for we know not how long. The forces of good and evil are engaged in mortal combat, and one of them must fall. Which is to be victorious?

Over half a century ago, Lowell answered the question thus:

"Truth forever on the scaffold, wrong forever on the throne,
Yet that scaffold sways the future, and behind the dim unknown
Standeth God within the shadow, keeping watch above His own."

In the pages of history we can read, as the poet had read, the story of that conflict, and see how, because God is watching above His own, truth is continually coming down from the scaffold and ascending the throne, and the good which evil men think is dead and buried, rises again, and goes forth to conquer the world.

It is for us to choose on which side we shall enlist in this conflict; there is no escape from taking part in it, for this is a war in which there are no neutrals; those who attempt to take such a place, will find that they are fighting first on one side, and then on the other, winning the enmity of all and the friendship of none.

There are two places where this conflict is going on; within the soul, where good and evil wage war upon each other until one of them is victorious, and we are either captives of sin and Satan (2 Tim. 2:23-26), or co-workers and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ (Rom. 8:16-17); and outside the soul in the world, where the ideals of those on either side are opposed to each other, and lead to actions corresponding with the ideals (John 3:19-21).

Now, if we have decided that we want to enlist on the side of good, how shall we begin our battle against the evil within ourselves, and against all the iniquities of the outside world?

When one wishes to enlist in an earthly army, he is

first of all required to take an oath of allegiance to the government of the country for which he wishes to fight; so we must make our solemn vow of allegiance to God, the supreme and only lawful ruler of the world (Ex. 20:3; Isa. 45:22; Jer. 10:6-7), and must promise to abide by the laws laid down in His word for the government of the body and soul of man, individually and collectively.

Second, the recruit takes his place in charge of some officer competent to instruct and command him; so we are to place ourselves under the Lord Jesus Christ, the captain of our salvation (Heb. 2:10), and be ready to obey His commands, however hard they may seem, and to follow where He leads, wherever that may be.

Next, the new soldier is given a uniform, with which he replaces his former garments, and thus is always to be distinguished from those who are not in the army, or are in some other army. So we are to put off "the old man and his deeds" (Eph. 4:22; Col. 3:8-9); and we are to put on "the new man" (Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10), whose qualities are mercy, kindness, humility, meekness, patience, and above all things, love (Col. 3:12-15).

The soldier is given proper equipment for warfare, with weapons of offense and defense. So God furnishes those who enlist in His service with the needful equipment, and Paul bids us "Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil" (Eph. 6:11).

Now, what does this armor consist of, and how can we put it on? We are told that it is an "armor of light" (Rom. 13:12). We can put it on by letting the light of God's word into our lives: "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Ps. 119:105); so by daily reading and studying the Bible, we can put on an armor of light, which will protect us against darkness without and within.

The armor of God is also an "armor of righteousness" (2 Cor. 6:7). When we have put on the armor of light by studying the Scriptures, we must put on the

armor of righteousness by practicing the truth which the light has revealed. It shows us our sin (Rom. 3:23); we must forsake the sin. It shows us a Savior from sin—(Rom. 3:24-25)—we must accept that Savior. It shows us that the Spirit of God in our lives will overcome sin (Rom. 8:1-17—we must ask that Spirit to come into our hearts, and must live by His guidance day by day.

Righteousness forms our breastplate (Eph. 6:14). The physical breastplate protects the vital organs—heart and lungs—so righteousness shields the Christian in the part which makes his religion real—the daily application of its principles to his conduct toward his fellow-men, as well as toward his Lord and Master. Paul also speaks of the "breastplate of faith and love" (1 Thess. 5:8). Faith and love are the roots of righteousness. We can not have one without the others; as surely as we have faith in God, and love for Him and for our neighbors, so surely shall we "do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly" with our God, which is all that He requires of us (Micah. 6:8). And any righteousness which does not spring from faith in God, and love for our neighbors, will not stand the test of time; it is like a tree cut off from its roots, and planted in the door-yard; it may appear flourishing for a time, but it will never bear fruit, and by and by it will wither away.

We must be "girt about with truth," if we are to stand against the power of evil; and the truth is found in the word of God (Ps. 19:9; John 8:31-32; 17:17).

Our feet are to be "shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace" (Eph. 6:15), that we may go about in the spirit of Him who brought this gospel, and bring its blessed message to the world wherever we go.

"The shield of faith" (Eph. 6:16) will gather up all the evil which may assail us, and keep it from entering our souls; for by faith we shall know that "all things work together for good to them that love God" (Rom. 8:28); that though trouble may come to us, it will not overcome us (John 16:33); that we can find refuge from

trouble in God (Ps. 27:5; 46:1); that He will deliver us us from our troubles (Ps. 34:7; 50:15; 91:14-15), and we can patiently wait His time (Ps. 30:5; Jas. 1:12; 1 Pet. 1:3-9).

The head is an important part which needs protection in time of battle, and the helmet was used for this purpose in old methods of warfare; the mind of the Christian needs protection; and salvation, with the hope which it brings us, is the helmet which will guard our minds not only against evil thoughts, but also against false doctrines, which in one guise or another, are always in the world, and struggling for the control of our mental life (Eph. 6:17; 1 Thess. 5:8).

The last part of our equipment is the only weapon that we are given: "The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (Eph. 6:17). This is to be used both for offense and defense: to conquer our enemies, and bring them over to the side of Christ, and to prevent them from gaining the victory over us. Our great Captain used it well, and from Him we can learn how to wield it effectively.

Immediately after the baptism of Jesus, He was led out to battle with the great enemy of God and man (Matt. 4:1). He was victorious in the combat, and every step of the victory was won by "the sword of the Spirit."

"If Thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread," said the tempter—an attempt to sow doubt in the heart of the Lord, as he had sowed it in the minds of our first parents; an effort to cause Christ to place the pleasures of earth before obedience to God, as Adam and Eve had done. But Jesus refused to let doubt enter. He knew that the assurance of His Sonship rested upon the word of God, and that obedience to His Father's word was stronger proof than the satisfaction of His hunger in a miraculous way would be, so He answered by quoting from the Scripture, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Deut. 8:3; Matt. 4:4; Luke 4:4).

Then, seeing that Christ would not doubt the word of God, Satan attempted to lead Him to misinterpret it; taking Him to a pinnacle of the temple, he asked Jesus to prove His Sonship by casting Himself down, and we find the devil piously quoting Scripture; "He shall give His angels charge over thee; and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone," said the tempter (Matt. 4:6; Luke 4:9; Ps. 91-11); but thanks be to God, Christ knew His Bible better than Satan did, so He replied: "It is written again, 'Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God'" (Deut. 6:16; Luke 4:12). A smattering of Bible knowledge is not enough for the soldier of Christ; we must know the book all the way through if we want to use the sword of the Spirit successfully, as Jesus did.

When one temptation fails, Satan tries another; and if the second fails, he tries a third; and he always chooses something in the line of our desires; so when he could not lead Jesus to sin by misinterpreting the Scriptures, he tried another method. Jesus had come to set up a kingdom in this world; there were many obstacles in the way, and Jesus saw ahead of Him a long, toilsome path to the throne. Now Satan offers Him a short-cut to the rulership: just to bow down and worship him; up here in the mountain there is no one to see—but the eye of God would see, and He would know that His Son had disobeyed, though no eye of man or angel might behold.

Besides this, the promises of the devil are all untruths—lies; the kingdoms of this world do not belong to him. He is usurping them now, but they belong to God, and He will wrest them from the power of Satan and give them to His Son—by way of the cross, and the tomb (Heb. 12:1-2), but then they will be His forever (Isa. 9:6-7). So Christ drove the tempter from His presence with these words: "Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, 'Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve'."

Thus Christ won the great victory over Satan; and

when we enlist under His banner, put on the armor of God, take the sword of the Spirit, "praying always with all supplication in the Spirit" (Eph. 6:18), He will stand by our side and help us in the battle against sin in our lives and in the world, till the victory is won (1 Cor. 15: 57; 1 John 5:3-5), and evil has been entirely overcome by good (Rom. 12:21).

Chapter XI.

SIN, SICKNESS, SORROW AND DEATH

"Sin is the transgression of the law," and "all unrighteousness is sin," says the Bible. Everything that fails to measure up to the requirements of the law of God, contained in the Scriptures, is sin (1 John 3:4). "Why did God create sin?" ask some persons, while others question thus: "Did God create sin?" Certainly not, is the answer given by the Bible: "Let no man say when he is tempted, 'I am tempted of God:' for God can not be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man." (Jas. 1:13).

Whence comes sin, then? From two sources: first, from Satan, who introduced it into the world, and tries to make every one sin (Gen. 3:1-6; Matt. 4:3-10; Luke 22:31; Acts 5:3); and second, from the heart of man, corrupted by yielding to Satan (Jas. 1:14).

God did not originate sin, which is evil, for He is good, and created all things good (Gen. 1:31; Matt. 19:17). Sin was born in the heart of Satan himself (1 John 3:8). Good and evil are alike self-originating, and both have existed from the beginning (Gen. 1:1; John 8:44); but good, because it is of God, will triumph over evil; the Son of God came into the world to destroy the works of the devil (1 John 3:8); the battle between good and evil is now being waged, and will end in the triumph of Christ, and the overthrow of Satan and his kingdom (Phil. 2:9-11; Rev. 5:13; 20:10).

One way in which the overcoming of evil is made sure, is by God's provision for getting rid of sin; human strength is powerless to break its dominion; you can prove this, as many others have proved it, by trying to keep the laws of God without His aid; your failures in word, deed, and thought, will be so constant and numerous that they will burden you with a sense of guilt, until you feel that even if you should in time succeed in

keeping His commandments perfectly, that could never wash away the stains already upon your soul.

How precious then are the promises of salvation from sin through Christ: the promise of pardon for the past and overcoming power for the future (Isa. 53:4-6; John 1:29; Heb. 2:17-18; I John 1:9). The peace which comes into the soul that has thrown itself upon these promises, and stands justified before God (Rom. 5:1), and freed from the bondage of sin (Rom. 6:14, 18; 8:15), is something that none but those who have experienced it can understand.

One of the effects of sin upon the human race, is seen in sickness; not that each individual case of illness is due to sin upon the part of the sufferer (John 9:2-3); but death of the body is part of the punishment for sin (Gen. 3:19; Rom. 6:23), and disease is the instrumentality through which death is brought about—injuries being classed with disease, because they produce disease in the parts injured—and even old age is a mild disease, a slow decaying of the physical powers.

Trouble is another part of the penalty of sin (Gen. 3:16-17), to which the race is subject, and yet which, like sickness, may or may not be due to the sin of the person who has it to endure (1 Sam. 2:12, 23; 3:11-14; Job 1:8-22).

Now, Christ has come to deliver us from the penalty, as well as the power of sin, so we naturally expect that He will deliver us from sickness, sorrow and death, and we find that we are not to be disappointed in our expectation; but, as even the redemption from sin will not be complete in this life (1 Cor. 3:1-2; 13:9-12; 1 Pet. 2:1-2; 1 John 3:1-2); and as death is the last enemy that is to be destroyed (1 Cor. 15:26), so sickness and sorrow are not to be banished immediately (Matt. 25:34-40; John 16:33), but the Christian will have a different attitude toward them than is possible to unbelievers.

The Christian does not fear death, for he looks upon it as only a sleep for the body (John 11:11; 1 Thess. 5:10),

the awakening of the soul to a larger and happier life (Ps. 17:15; John 11: 25-26; 14:2-3; Phil. 1:23-24).

We find that both sickness and sorrow sometimes come from God as a punishment for sin (Num. 11:18-33; 21:5-6; Judges 2:11-15). Therefore we would do well, when they come upon us, to examine ourselves, and see if there is not some way in which we have broken the laws of God for the body or the soul; for only by turning from our sin to the Lord, can we hope to find relief in such cases (Num. 21:7-9; Judges 2:10, 15; 1 Sam. 7: 3-10).

Sometimes these troubles are sent by God as a means of discipline, to correct some fault of character, and to bring us nearer perfection (Heb. 12:7-10); then we are to bear them in the spirit of Jesus Christ, who bore so much trouble in order to save us(Heb. 12:1-3).

Sometimes Satan is the direct cause of our troubles, because of his malice toward all things good, and his desire to overthrow those who are living faithful Christian lives (Job 1:8-12; 2:3-7; Luke 13:10-16; 22:31); sometimes it is the wicked, who are servants of Satan, who are responsible for our troubles (John 15:17-20; 2 Tim. 3: 12; 1 Pet. 3:14-17; 4:12-14); at such times, we can have the comfort of Christ's own words promising a blessing to those who are persecuted (Matt. 5:11-12); we can find inspiration in the lives of those who have preceded us in the path of suffering (Jas. 5:10-11), and in the example and fellowship of Christ our Lord (1 Pet. 2:21-23; 4: 13).

For these reasons, sickness and sorrow do not rest upon the Christian with the same weight as upon others, for he has the promise that God will use them to work out good for him (Rom. 8:28; 2 Cor. 4:17; Heb. 12:11); he has the promise of help in bearing them (Ps. 55:22; John 16:33; 2 Cor. 12:10); he has the promise of deliverance from trouble and sickness through prayer (Ps. 50:15; 91:15; Jas. 5:13-16), and the promise of a future life where these things shall be unknown (Isa. 25:8; Rev. 21:

4). Therefore, leaning upon these promises, and experiencing their fulfillment in times of sickness and sorrow, he can go through them as a conqueror (Rom. 8:35-39), and when the end comes, like Paul, he can look forward to the crown of righteousness which the Lord will give to all them that love His appearing (2 Tim. 4:8).

CHAPTER XII.

SPIRITUAL HEALTH.

The soul of man comes into the world sick; our first parents lost their spiritual health by sin, and all their descendants have inherited their disease, God had warned Adam and Eve, saying, "Thou shalt surely die" (Gen. 2:17), and no sooner had they partaken of the forbidden fruit, than the human race became desperately ill with sin (Isa. 1:4-6). No one is exempt from this disease; all are sinners (Eccl. 7:20; Rom. 3:23; 1 John 1:8), and in their natural condition incapable of goodness (Luke 18:19), and unable to keep the law of God (Rom. 8:7; Gal. 5:17).

But Christ has come to restore the soul to health (Matt. 9:12-13); and to give a new birth, by which we can be re-established in the position of children of God, which we have lost through sin (John 1:12-13; 3:3, 5-8; Eph. 2:1-6). So serious is its disease, indeed, that it is practically already dead; but Christ has come, with power to restore it to life (Eph. 2:1, 5).

The life and health of the soul having been restored, its continuance, like the preservation of physical health, depends upon the observance of divine laws; and we find that these laws, as well as the laws for the body, are based upon human needs.

And these needs correspond closely with the physical needs. The test for physical life, is breath; if the body does not breathe, it is dead. The test for spiritual life, is love (1 John 3:14); just as soon as love begins, the soul begins to live, and where there is no love, there is no spiritual life. Just as God has provided organs for breathing, and something to breathe, so has He given us hearts with which to love, and objects for our love.

As God alone can cause us to begin breathing, and to continue breathing, so He alone can cause us to begin loving, and keep on loving. And as breathing is not only

a privilege, but a duty, which must be done if we wish to live, and done correctly, if we wish to have physical health, so love is not merely a privilege, but a duty, and the most important duty we have (Lev. 19:18; Deut. 6:4-5; Matt. 22:37-39; Gal. 5:14).

We have seen that some air is impure, and unfit to breathe; so there are some things that are impure, and not fit to be loved (Amos 5:15; 1 Tim. 6:9-10; 2 Tim. 3:1-5; 1 John 2:15). We must see that these things do not poison the atmosphere of the soul, or they will undermine our spiritual health, and finally result in the soul's death.

The proper objects of our love are pointed out in the Bible: first of all, God (Matt. 22:37-38); second, our neighbor (Matt. 22:39); it is taken for granted that we will love those who love us, but we are not to stop there; we must love those who hate us (Matt. 5:44-45).

Aside from God and our fellow-human beings, we should also love things and places which are in harmony with God's will, and which will help us to serve Him. We must love righteousness (Ps. 45:7) and mercy (Micah 6:8); we must love God's house (Ps. 26:8; 84:10) and his law (Ps. 119:97, 113), and his church (1 Pet. 2:17). Even the love of life is proper in its place, and an incentive to righteousness (Ps. 34:12-14).

We are also plainly directed as to the manner of our loving. We must love God with all our powers (Luke 10:27). There must be no pretense about our loving; it must be sincere (Rom. 12:9). Our love for one another must be brotherly (Rom. 12:10; Heb. 13:1); it must be pure and fervent (1 Pet. 1:22); it must be shown by our actions (Deut. 15:7; Luke 3:11; 1 John 3:17-18). To sum it all up, our love for one another must be like the loev of God and the love of Christ for us (John 15:9, 12; Eph. 4:32; 1 John 3:16). In the fifth chapter of Ephesians, and the first nine verses of the sixth chapter, we have a classic on love as it is to be shown in every relationship of life; most of this is repeated in Colossians third chapter, and first verse of chapter four.

In some instances, the word love has been translated "charity" in the version of the Bible commonly used: in the revised version this has been changed to love. The thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians is a eulogy of love, which we ought to memorize and repeat every week, and the teachings of which we should practice every day; the analysis of love in verses four to seven, clears up our questions as to what love is, and shows us that it is composed of many virtues in one.

In fact, as it is true that when we breathe properly, life is present, and all its activities follow, so when we love as we ought, all the activities of the spiritual life follow, and we have all the virtues. Love is the first fruit of the Spirit, and from it spring all the others (Gal. 5:22-23). Without it, spiritual health is impossible; with it, the law of God can be kept, and the soul will be strong and perfect in health.

An abundant supply of love is to be found in God (2 Cor. 13:11; Eph. 3:19; 1 John 4:8, 16), but as we must open our windows and doors to secure fresh air, so must we open our hearts to receive this love (John 5:42; Eph. 3:17-19; 2 Thess. 3:5; Rev. 3:20).

And we can no more love without God than we can breathe without air; all love comes from Him, even when are are not conscious of His presence, and have not surrendered our hearts to Him (1 John 4:7); yet when we do not look to Him for the love, we poison what He sends us by our selfishness, consequently are spiritually diseased, and unable to obey His commandments (1 John 5:3); but by receiving, trusting, and living according to His word, His love will be perfected in us, and our spiritual health will grow better day by day.

As one of the most important needs of the body is for food, so we find the soul of man hungers; he may not know how to satisfy that hunger; indeed, like the newborn babe, if left to himself, man would not know where or how to find spiritual food, and the soul would die of starvation.

But God has made provision for satisfying the hunger of the soul, as well as that of the body ;we hunger for knowledge of God and communion with Him, and this He has given partially through nature, chiefly through personal communication, by prophets and apostles, and through the Bible, in which is summed up all the instruction necessary to a healthy spiritual life (Ps. 23:5; Prov. 4:20-22; John 6:35; 21:15-18; 1 Pet. 2:2).

We may not be conscious of this hunger, yet it exists in every soul, and we try to satisfy it in various ways; the heathen nations, who have lost communication with God because of sin, make for themselves idols of wood and stone, or of silver and gold (Acts 17:23), and try to still the craving of the spirit with them; but we can see how they fail to fill the need of the soul, and how it deteriorates until man is but little better than the beasts.

In civilized countries we do not try to satisfy our spiritual hunger by making idols; yet many of us are trying to feed upon things which are equally incapable of sustaining life in the soul, and keeping it strong and healthy.

It may be we are trying to satisfy the soul with pleasure; it may be with work; it may be with education; it may be with love of family and friends; some of which are good things in themselves, and may be helpful to the life of the soul; yet if we leave out the knowledge of God, and communion with Him by means of Bible study and prayer, our spiritual life can no more be healthy than could the physical life if we tried to satisfy our hunger with those fruits and vegetables which are large in bulk but have little nutrition, neglecting to use the carbonaceous and nitrogenous foods which are the chief support of the body (Isa. 55:2-3; John 6:33; 17:3).

Our communion with God through His word and prayer should be regular. We would not expect to be physically strong if we ate but one meal a week, yet many persons think they can become spiritually strong by hearing a sermon once a week, and spending a half-hour reading the Bible on Sunday afternoon. We need

food every day, and more than once a day, and so we need daily communion with God, at frequent intervals (Ps. 5:3; 55:17; Dan. 6:10; Deut. 6:6-7; Acts 17-11).

The soul thirsts as well as hungers, we are told, and again the supply which will satisfy our need is found in God, and nowhere else (Ps. 42:1; 63:1; Isa. 55:1; Jer. 2:13; John 4:10, 13-14). We should drink freely of the water of life (Rev. 22:17) if we would have the soul health which brings joy (Isa. 12:3).

The soul needs exercise in order to grow strong, and as the first exercise of infant hands is reaching out after something, so the first spiritual exercise is faith—the reaching out of the soul after God, and taking Him into our lives.

At an early age the child learns to walk, and the manner in which he walks, and the places where he walks, have much to do with the health of his body; so the soul must learn to walk, and on the manner and place of its walking depends, to a great extent, spiritual health (Gen. 17:1; Ex. 16:4; Ps. 84:11; Prov. 10:9; Isa, 2:5; Jer. 6:16; Micah 6:8; John 8:12; Eph. 4:1; 1 John 1:7).

The child must learn to work, if he is to develop his body and mind properly, and we must learn to do spiritual work, if we are to be properly developed souls; and as the physical work we do must be done by the direction of the mind, so must our spiritual work call upon the body for co-operation (Ex. 31:2-6; 1 Chron. 28:20-21; Neh. 4:6; 6:1-9; Eph. 4:28). As there is great variety in physical labor, so in the spiritual life there is something for every one to do, and use for all kinds of talents in the work of the Lord (Matt. 4:19; 9:37-38; Rom. 12:4-8; 1 Cor. 12:28-30).

The soul, like the body, needs rest; there is so much in the world to weary our spirit: sin opprosses us, work beyond our strength burdens us, trouble wears away our vitality. But God provides rest for the soul (Ps. 37:7; Jer. 6:16; Heb. 4:9); Christ calls us to Himself for rest (Matt. 11:28-29), and if we answer that call, making

Him our constant refuge from the cares and troubles of the world, we shall have spiritual health, and our strength will be suited to our needs day by day (Deut. 33:25; Ps. 27:5; Isa. 40:31; Eph. 3:14-16; Phil. 4:13).

The soul must be kept pure if we are to have spiritual health (Ps. 24:3-5); none but the pure in heart can see God (Matt. 5:8), and unless we have communion with Him we can not have healthy souls. We can keep our souls pure by taking the word of God into them (Ps. 119: 1, 11; John 15:3); by thinking of pure things (Phil. 4: 8; 1 Tim. 4:12-15); by resisting temptations to do wrong (Col. 3:5-10); by using pure language (Eph. 4:29); and by prayer (Matt. 6:13).

If peace is an important factor in bodily health, it is indispensable to the health of the soul. We are told that there is no peace for the wicked (Isa. 57:20-21; 59:8; Rom. 3:17). Now peace has three phases, and we shall see that this statement is true in regard to all of them.

In the first place, peace comes from reconciliation with God, which can be obtained only through repentance and faith in Christ (Acts 2:38; Rom. 5:1; Eph. 2: 14-15). Secondly, peace comes from faith in God as our constant helper (Isa. 26:3-4; Phil. 4:6-7). And lastly, we can not have peace without trying to be at peace with our fellow-men (Ps. 34:14; Rom. 14:19; Eph. 4:1-3; 1 Thess. 5:13).

Peace is the heritage which Christ left to those who believe in Him (John 14:27), and it is our part to take this inheritance and make it our support, so that when the storms of life come, we may not only be unshaken by them ourselves, but may be able to sustain and rescue others (Acts 27:21-25).

If, then, we wish the blessing of spiritual health, we have found the way to it made plain in the Scriptures; if we are still in our original condition, afflicted by the disease of sin, we may be healed by coming to the Great Physician, who can save us, no matter how far toward death we have gone (Mark 2:5-12; Heb. 7:25); but if

we have already been cured of this disease, let us abide by the rules He has given for keeping our souls well and strong for His service (Eph. 6:10).

So we shall find that our bodily health, too, will be improved (Prov. 3:8; 4:20-22), as long as it is the will of God that we should live and labor for Him; and when it is time for us to depart from this world, we shall go without fear (Ps. 23:4; Heb. 2:15), rejoicing because we are to spend eternity with Christ our Lord (Phil. 1: 21-23).

Chapter XIII.

THE HOPE SET BEFORE US.

A hopeful spirit is of great value in building up physical health, but hopelessness is a great hindrance (Prov. 17:22). For this reason alone, Christianity gives us an advantage over others in seeking to regain or preserve health. It holds out hope to all; the sinful, the sick, the bereaved, the tempted, the persecuted; the word of God has a message of hope for every class of humanity (Isa. 1:18; John 3:16; Ps. 41:3; Matt. 5:4; 1 Thess. 4:13-14; Ps. 10:14; Matt. 11:5; Phil. 4:19; Rom. 5:4-5; Jas. 1:12; Matt. 5:10-12).

The hopes of the world are vain, for they are based upon falsehood (Isa. 44:20; Jer. 3:23; 17:5-6; 13), and the storms of life sweeping over them, destroy them (Matt. 7:26-27), so that sinners are really without hope in the world (Eph. 2:12; 1 Thess. 4:13). But the hopes of the Christian are sure of fulfillment (Jer. 17:7-8; Heb. 6:18-19), because they are based upon the promises of God.

The Christian knows that we are not to expect a life of ease and pleasure in this world (John 16:33; 1 Cor. 15:19; 2 Tim. 3:12), for our life on earth is a temporary condition—we are not to stay here always (Heb. 13:14). While those who are of the world may fall into despair, the Christian can hope in all circumstances, for God has promised to bring us safely through every difficulty if we trust in Him (Ps. 37:23-25; Isa. 41:10, 43:2; Matt. 28:19-20; John 14:23; Rom. 8:35-39; 1 Cor. 10:13; 2 Cor. 4:8-9; Heb. 13:5-6). This hope is closely connected with the promises to answer prayer, for although He sees our need, and often starts the answer on its way before we begin to pray (Isa. 65:24; Dan. 9:23), yet He charges us with the duty of calling upon Him for help, and promises that He will hear and answer our prayer (2 Chron. 7:14; Ps. 34:15, 17; Isa. 55:6; 58:9-10; Matt. 18:19; 21:22; John 15:7; 16:24; 1 Thess. 5:17).

The hope of future perfection is the Christian's great incentive now. If we think this life is to be all, we shall be so absorbed in its physical possessions and pleasures that we shall not care whether we do good or evil in the world (Eccl. 8:15; Luke 12:16-20; 16:19-31); and if we find these things unsatisfactory, and seek something higher, like industry, or art, or education, yet we shall not find much joy in them, because they will not give us much advantage over those who are engaged in the lower pursuits (Eccl. 2:4-17).

Only when we realize that there is a time of judgment coming, when the wicked will be punished and the good rewarded, will we have a strong motive for abstaining from evil, and trying to live righteously (Eccl. 12:13-14; Matt. 12:36; 16:27; 25:31-46; Acts 10:42; 17:31; Rom. 14:10-13; 2 Cor. 5:10).

Knowing that we must face a holy God for judgment, we do not want to come before Him with unholy lives behind us. But no matter how perfectly we might live from this time forth, our future good conduct could not blot out the guilt of the past; so God has promised to blot it out if we believe on Christ (John 3:16, 36; 5:24; Rom. 5:1; 8:1-2; 1 Cor. 6:9-11; Col. 2:13-14; 1 John 1:9).

Then His Spirit dwelling in us will deliver us from the bondage of sin, so that we can henceforth obey His law of love (John 14:26; Rom. 8:5-14; Gal. 5:18-23). We need not be discouraged, however, because we do not attain perfection immediately, for if we continue to follow the example given us, in spite of failures (Matt. 5:48; John 15:12; Phil. 3:12-14; Heb. 12:1-2), we have the promise that we shall make progress toward it here (2 Cor. 3:18; Gal. 5:16; 6:9; Phil. 1:6), and that our efforts will be crowned with complete success in the next life (Rom. 8:19-21; 1 Cor. 15:47-49; Phil. 3:20-21; Col. 1:21-23). If we keep these thoughts in mind, they will become a strong factor in producing purity (2 Pet. 3:10-14; 1 John 3:2-3), constancy (1 Cor. 15:58), courage (2 Cor. 4:12-18), patience (Jas. 5:5-8), and joy (1 Pet. 1:3-9) in our lives.

Then, not only are we promised perfection of character; the most perfect character in the world could not be perfectly happy in a world where misery abounds. Christ was perfect, and He had great joy in His life (John 15:11), yet He was also "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief" (Isa. 53:3). His heart was moved with compassion for straying humanity (Mark 6:34), and grieved at their refusal to turn from sin (Matt. 23:37; Luke 19:41-42).

So would it be with us if we became perfect, yet were compelled to remain in a world full of sickness, death, sorrow and sin. But we have the promise of a time when these shall all be banished. This time, to which the Christian looks forward eagerly, is to be ushered in by the return of Christ, which is rapidly drawing near. "The day and the hour knoweth no man," but the assurance is ours that He will come again to receive the Church as His bride, and to reign in righteousness over a redeemed earth. This will be a time of joy for all true believers (Matt. 25:1-46; John 14:2-3; Acts 1:11; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; 2 Thess. 1:6-10).

Following this earthly reign of a thousand years, God has provided a new world to which we shall be taken; a holy city, into which neither sin and its penatly of suffering; nor those who cling to sin, can ever enter (Rev. 21:1-2, 8; 22:15); it is only for those who have overcome sin through Christ (Rev. 7:13-14; 21:7).

There, having been made perfect in character (Heb. 12:23), we shall also have the ideal surroundings for which we long in vain here (Rev. 21:1-4, 23-27; 22:1-5), a Paradise which we shall never lose, because there is no serpent to tempt us, and even if there were, there would be in us nothing to respond to the temptation (Rev. 22:3-4).

With such a hope set before them, Christians have an unfailing source of joy; no matter what they may lose, they always have God, with all that He has promised them, and they will be happy in Him (Hab. 3:17-18;

Phil. 4:4, 19), for they are "heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ," even now enjoying the earnestness of their inheritance (Eph. 1:14), and in due time they shall enter into its full possession (Eph. 1:10-11; 1 Pet. 1:3-4, 13), which they shall enjoy forever (Rev. 22:5).

With such a hope freely offered him (Rev. 22:17), how can any right-minded person refuse to receive it? Whosoever would find the secret of happiness, the source of unfailing joy, the fountain of life, need only turn to the Lord, for He has abundant store for all who will come to Him (Isa. 12:2-3; 55:1; John 4:13-14; Ps. 36:9; John 10:10; 2 Tim. 1:10).

Chapter XIV.

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

The word "church" is derived from a Greek word which means "belonging to God." A church is any body of people giving their allegiance to the Lord. The Christian church is composed of all those who have declared their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of God and Savior of the world, and their purpose to live in fellowship with Him (Matt. 16:15-18, 24; Acts 2:37-47).

The division of the church into denominations has been an obstacle in the minds of many persons, to their believing in Christ, and uniting with the church. They ask "How are we to know which is the right church among so many? How are we to decide between Methodists and Presbyterian, Episcopalians and Lutherans, Baptists and Congregationalists, Disciples (or Christian Church) and Reformed, and even divisions of these divisions of Christianity? Surely they cannot all be right," say some, "and therefore the probablity is that they are all wrong, so we will have nothing to do with the religion which they teach."

In His last prayer with His disciples, Jesus asked "That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me" (John 17: 21); and it is true that the greater the unity in the church, the more influence it will have upon the world, for its divisions are human, while its unity is divine.

Divisions in the church at Corinth arose from attachment to different leaders (1 Cor. 3:3-4). There was no difference in the doctrines of Paul and Apollos, yet the converts of each had so much special affection for the one who had been the means of saving them, that they were in danger of overlooking the fact that the men were only the means which God had used for their salvation. Denominations of Paulinians and Apollonians would

probably have been organized at that time, had Paul not written to reprove the church, and to remind them that Christ alone was the foundation upon which all must build.

Diferences of opinion in the church had risen even earlier, but they were settled by a council of all the leading Christians, gathered at Jerusalem (Acts 15:4-29).

Human minds are not all cast in the same mold, and will see truth from different points of view. There are only two ways of procuring uniformity of opinion; one of these is by the repression of thought, which leads to lack of individuality; this was the way in which uniformity was obtained during the Dark Ages, when the Bible was a sealed book to all but a corrupted clergy, who interpreted it according to the dictates of the Pope, and the common people blindly followed their leadership.

The Reformation came when a few of the clergy began to think for themselves, and opened the Bible to the people again. With the wave of intense interest in the Bible, came much study of it, and various interpretations by able leaders. Luther, for instance, turned from the Roman Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation, which teaches that the bread and wine of the Lord's Supper are transformed into the real body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, and taught instead consubstantiation—that His body and blood are only present with the bread and wine. The Lutherans still hold this doctrine. Zwingli, on the other hand, taught that the bread and wine are merely symbolic of the body and blood of Christ, and the controversy between the adherents of these two doctrines often led to bitterness of feeling between them.

John Calvin, a French reformer, who in 1536 publisehd his "Institutes of the Christian Religion," emphasized five special points in his teaching: (1) Particular election. (2) Particular redemption. (3) Moral inability in a fallen state. (4) Irresistible grace. (5) Final perserevance.

James Harmensen, better known as Arminius, was a

Dutch theologian, who differed with Calvin in some of his doctrines. He undertook to combat Calvin's doctrines with the following five points of Arminianism: (1) That God from all eternity predestinated to eternal life those who, He foresaw, would have permanent faith in Christ. (2) That Christ died for all mankind, not simply for the elect. (3) That man requires regeneration by the Holy Spirit. (4) That man may resist divine grace. (5) That man may fall from grace. Nearly all of our present denominations nominally adhere to one or the other of these reformers.

But while Calvinists and Arminians for many years disputed as hotly as if their doctrines were irreconcileable, we of these later days can see that some of them were only differences in the manner of expressing the same truth (1 and 3), and the others are two sides of the same truth.

The Arminian says Christ died for all mankind, and He did (John 3:16). The Calvinist says Christ died for the elect, which is equally true, for He knew that while His sacrifice was made for all, many would not accept Him, and He died for those who would accept Him (1 Pet. 1:2; 2:24).

The Calvinist says the grace of God is irresistible (Matt. 26-75; John 21:15-17; Acts 9:3-18; Eph. 2:8). The Arminian says that man may resist divine grace (Luke 18:18-24; Acts 17:32; 26:28-29). But we can see that while the grace of God may be resisted by the unbelieving heart, there comes a time when it is irresistible to the believer (Rom. 1:16; 1 Cor. 1:22-24).

The Calvinist says that those who accept Christ will be kept from falling, and are sure of salvation (John 10: 28; Rom. 8:38-39; Jude 25-26). The Arminian says man may fall from grace (Matt. 12:43-45; Heb. 6:4-6; 10:26; 2 Pet. 2:20). But we can see that these differences are not irreconcileable, and the Calvinist acknowledges that there is danger of back-sliding—that those who have received the word, and started following Christ, need to be

careful to see that their roots go deep enough so that they will not wither under the heat of temptation, and that they must see to the destruction of the weeds, lest their spiritual life be choked by them (Matt. 13:20-22), and they fail to come into saving relationship with Christ, (2 Cor. 13:5; 2 Thess. 2:9-10; 1 Pet. 5:8-11).

While the Arminian, though still emphasizing the danger of falling from grace (Matt. 24:12; 1 Cor. 10:12; Gal. 5:1-4), acknowledges that those who hold fast to Christ will never be forsaken by Him, and are sure of final salvation (Ps. 37:28; Matt. 24:13; Col. 1:21; 2 Thess. 2:13-14; 1 Pet. 1:3-6).

Besides these differences of doctrines, there are differences of opinion in regard to the proper mode of baptism — whether by immersion, pouring, or sprinkling. While the majority of the evangelical denominations hold that sprinkling is the proper form, the Baptists, Christians (or Disciples), and others, hold that immersion is the proper method. Yet none of these brethren would now presume to say that his method is essential to salvation.

Differences in the government of the churches have given rise to some of our denominational names. Episcopal churches are those having a government by bishops (Latin, Episcopus=bishop); these bishops are chosen from among the clergy, to superintend the work of all the churches within their respective districts, having authority superior to that of the rest of the clergy.

Presbyterian churches are named from being governed by elders (Latin, presbyter). They believe that the words elder and bishop used in the new Testament, are different names for the same officer (Acts 20:17, 28; 1 Tim. 3:1-5). They are governed by elders elected by the congregations, these elders being divided into teaching elders, or ministers, and ruling elders; these elders share equally in the government of the church, both in the individual congregations, and in the legislative bodies of the denomination—the presbytery, Synod, and General Assembly.

The Congregational system of government is that in which each congregation makes its own laws, and is not under the authority of any body outside itself. The Congregational churches, and other American churches having this form of government, however, have councils to which representatives of the various churches are sent, where they confer together about the work in which they have a common interest.

These three forms of government might be classed as follows: The Episcopalian verges on aristocracy; the Presbyterian is republican, and the Congregational, democratic.

Modes of worship also create distinctions among the churches, for some, like the Episcopalians, have liturgical services, while others worship in more informal ways, preferring to pray as the Spirit moves them rather than to use set forms.

These differences of government, modes of baptism, and forms of worship do not affect the fundamental truths of Christianity, which are simple enough for any child to understand. The divergences among evangelical churches are only in things which are not essential to the Christian faith; the sprinkled Christian and the immersed Christian love their Lord equally well, and because of their mutual love for Him love each other, and can work together for the promotion of His kingdom.

The applicant for church membership is not asked whether he believes in the particular doctrine and form of government of the church to which he seeks admission, but simply whether he accepts Christ as his Savior, and will try to obey Him in all things. Most of the churches give letters to other denominations, or if they do not, will receive members from other denominations on re-affirmation of faith, as distinguished from confession or profession of faith by new converts to Christianity.

This unity in diversity has been brought about by the second method of securing uniformity: the spirit of love, which is the fruit of the Spirit of God in the souls of

believers, causing unity in faith and work (Gal. 5:22), and thus answering Christ's prayer "that they all may be one" (John 17:23; 1 Cor. 12:4-6; Eph. 4:1-3).

Never since the Reformation have the Protestant churches been so closely united as they are today, and the fellowship grows closer all the time, as they work together for the establishment of Christ's kingdom in the world. To reject the religion of Christ because His followers are divided into denominations, would be as foolish as to reject American citizenship because American voters are divided into parties.

If we are truly seeking health, either spiritually or physically, we can find no better aid than the evangelical churches give. Their ideals are higher than those of the world (Luke 12:29-31; Rom. 12:2; Col. 3:1-17); their fellowship with each other is sweeter (John 15:12; Acts 20:17-38); their relationship to God is closer (John 1:12; 2 Cor. 6:14-18); their work is more worth while and more enduring (Ps. 112; Matt. 19:29; John 6:27; 1 Cor. 15:58; Col. 3:23-24), and their hopes more certain of fulfilment (Rom. 5:5-9; Heb. 6:18-19; 1 Pet. 1:3-5).

The interests of the church are broad enough to take us out of our old selves (Matt. 13:38; Acts 1:8); high enough to lift us above our natural selves (Matt. 5:16; Luke 10:2; Phil. 1:27; Heb. 12:1-2), and deep enough to develop our spiritual life and health (Ps. 36:6; 1 Cor. 2:10; Eph. 3:14-19), and thus give us a joy which brings physical health through the abundant life of Christ (Ps. 16:11; Prov. 12:28; Isa. 52:8-9; John 10:10; Titus 3:4-7).

Chapter XV

PLANS AND FURTHER BIBLE STUDY

It is taken for granted that those who have read this book will have more than a passing interest in religion, and that, having begun the study of its chief text-book, the Bible, in connection with the "Christian Science of Health," they will wish to continue it permanently. The great themes which we have been considering have only been touched upon in this little volume. For this reason, a few plans for further study which have been found helpful by others are given here.

A reference Bible is necessary for this study, and preferably one with a concordance or subject-index, most of the Bibles with teacher's helps containing both. These are very moderate in price,, and most homes already contain one or more of them.

Joining a good Sunday School class will be found very helpful in the study of the Bible. The thoughts of the teacher and other members of the class will often throw clearer light upon passages than our own study has given.

As we study the lesson for each week, it is very helpful to read each day the home reading given in the lesson helps furnished by the school; another aid, is the looking up of each reference given on the passage being studied.

Studying the Bible topically, was one of D. L. Moody's favorite methods. Take some important subject, such as faith, hope, love, sin, prayer, God, Christ, Holy Ghost or Spirit—and by means of the concordance and subject-index find out all that the Bible says about each one. This is the best method of making ourselves so familiar with the teaching of the Bible on fundamental points, that we shall not be misled by false doctrines which profess to be based upon the Bible, but which really contradict the word of God on the most vital truths of Christianity.

Memorize as many of these passages as possible, for

as David says, we must hide the word in our hearts, to keep us from sinning against God (Ps. 119:11). John Flavel, a Christian writer of the seventeenth century, says "Keep the word and the word will keep you." "Conscience cannot be urged or awed by forgotten truth."

The Bible has a story to tell—the story of redeeming love—and this is a connected narrative running through the whole book, from Genesis to Revelation. We can never grasp this historical connection of the Bible until we read it straight through, just as we would read any other book. From personal experience, as well as observation, I can testify to the need of reading the Bible in this way; for in my childhood days I had the vaguest ideas concerning the time when the various persons in the Bible lived. King Saul and Saul of Tarsus were sometimes mixed; some events which were hundreds of years apart, I thought I had happened about the same time; while others which were really closely connected, I supposed had happened many years apart. I remember my surprise when I first learned that the events given in the first few chapters of Acts occurred within a few weeks after the ascension of Christ. We had always studied about the ascension from one of the gospels, and then some time had elapsed before we began the study of Acts, and our first lesson in that book was usually Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost.

The faster we read the Bible through, the better will be our grasp upon the connection of all its parts. By reading only three chapters each week-day, and five chapters on Sunday, we can finish it in a little less than a year, even if we divide the one hundred and nineteenth Psalm, which is very long, into six chapters. By doubling the number of chapters read each day, we can finish it in six months, and be doing no more than if we studied the General History at school in six months, which is usually done, in addition to many other studies, still leaving time for additional duties and pleasures. It would be well to do this for our first complete reading.

After going through the Bible several times in succession, we shall be well grounded in its history and doctrines, and will just need to refresh our memories by a consecutive reading occasionally, studying it in other ways in the intervening time.

Reading one book at a time is another method suggested by D. L. Moody, and this is also an excellent way. "Reading for the story" sometimes, was suggested by Robert J. Burdette. Take the story of Abraham, or Joseph, or Ruth, or David, or Paul, and begin reading it like any other story, and you will find yourself becoming so interested that you will not want to stop until you have finished it.

Whatever methods we use, regularity in Bible study is as important as regularity in meals. We should set aside at least fifteen minutes a day for this purpose; more, if possible, and the earlier in the day the better. Rising half an hour earlier than usual, to begin the day with God by studying His word, though it may be hard at first, brings such a blessing that we will not easily give up the habit. It may necessitate an earlier hour for retiring, but "early to bed and early to rise" makes a man healthy, and wealthy and wise" in the things of the kingdom of God, as well as in earthly affairs ,if we use the first few moments of the day in communion with God through Bbile study and prayer.

No Bible study can accomplish what it should, however, unless it is done in the spirit of prayer. We must ask God to open our eyes, that we may behold wondrous things out of His law (Ps. 119:18), for His Spirit is our teacher (John 14:26), and we need Him to apply the lessons to our hearts.

And last of all, to get the most good out of the Bible, we must not forget to practice its teachings in our lives every day (Matt. 7:24-27; Jas. 1:22-24). They were wise men who expressed the truth in these words: "That the word may become effectual unto salvation, we must attend thereunto with diligence, preparation, and prayer;

receive it with faith and love, lay it up in our hearts, and practice it in our lives." By following their advice we shall receive all the blessings, physical, mental and spiritual, which it has for humanity.

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